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"Guys like me are kind of musical archaeologists, with a spirit for exploration and that deep love for music and wanting to unearth forgotten sounds and try to find new ones." Buck 65

JAZZ FESTIVAL

BEST FREE SHOWS

8 p.m./10 p.m. Follow Follow (Samsung stage): The spirits of John Coltrane and Fela Kuti meet in the musical imaginations of Rainer Wiens, Jean Derome and Thom Gossage

8 p.m. Calexico with Luz de Luna (Metropolis): Desert-roamers Joey Burns and John Convertino harvest music that toughens their sound but leaves enough room to warrant their inclusion in a jazz festival.

ON TODAY

TICKETED SHOWS

5 and 10 p.m. Christopher O'Riley plays Radiohead, Chapelle Historique du Bon Pasteur, 100 Sherbrooke St. E., $22.50.
6 p.m. Cat Power, Spectrum, 318 Ste. Catherine St. W. Sold out.
6 p.m. Michel Donato et ses amis européens, Salles du Gesù, 1200 Bleury St. Sold out.
6 p.m. McCoy Tyner Septet, with Dave Leibman, Wallace Roney, Donald Harrison, Steve Turre, Eric Gravat and Charnett Moffet, Théâtre Maisonneuve, Place des Arts, $45.50 to $65.50.
7 p.m. Corinne Bailey Rae, with Shane Philips, Club Soda, 1225 St. Laurent Blvd., $24.50.
7:30 p.m. Biréli Lagrène, with Alain Caron and His Big Band, conducted by Michael Abéné, Théâtre Jean Duceppe, Place des Arts, $37.50.
8:30 p.m. Martha Wainwright, with Andrew Bird, Metropolis, 59 Ste. Catherine St. E., $22.50.
9 p.m. Maikotron Unit, Musée d'art contemporain de Montréal, Salle Beverly Webster Rolph, 185 Ste. Catherine St. W., $17.50.
10 p.m. Kenny Garrett Quartet, Spectrum, 318 Ste. Catherine St. W., $34.50.
10:30 p.m. Daniel Mille, Salles du Gesù, 1200 Bleury St., $24.50.
Midnight. Buck 65 and Kilia-Jewel, Club Soda, 1225 St. Laurent Blvd., $21.50.

FREE SHOWS

11 a.m. and 1:30 p.m. La Petite École du Jazz, Grande Place, Complexe Desjardins.
Noon. Gadji-Gadjo, Terrasse Amarula.
1 p.m. Accoules Sax, Terrasse Amarula.
3 p.m. Famul Jazz de l'Université Laval, General Motors Stage.
4 p.m. Accoules Sax, Alcan Stage.
5 p.m. Sweet Dixie, CBC Television-Best Buy stage.
5:30 p.m. Loto-Québec parade with Zuruba, starts from Alcan stage.
6 p.m. Rabeett 5, General Motors stage.
6:30 p.m. Marc Atkinson Trio, Carrefour General Motors.
7 p.m. Willow, Savoy Room of Metropolis, 59 Ste. Catherine St. E., free with pass.
7 p.m. L'Esprit de la Nouvelle Orléans, Terrasse Amarula.
7 p.m. Danny Rood, Loto-Québec stage.
7 and 10 p.m. Phantom Power Combo Deluxe, Club Jazz TD Canada Trust.
7:30 p.m. Donné Roberts, Bell stage.
8 and 10 p.m. The Fabulous Lolo Sings Rocksteady, Samsung stage.
8 and 10 p.m. Andrew Schinasi Quartet, CBC Television-Best Buy stage.
8 and 10 p.m. Melissa Stylianou, Alcan stage.
9 and 11 p.m. Surprise show, General Motors stage.
9 and 11 p.m. Ricky Paquette, Loto-Québec stage.
9 p.m. Kiran Ahluwalia, Carrefour General Motors.
10 p.m. Wibutee, Bell stage.
11 p.m. John Roney Trio, Hyatt Regency, Salon Jeanne Mance, free with festival card.
Midnight. Phantom Power Combo Deluxe, Savoy Room of Metropolis, 59 Ste. Catherine St. E.

DISC OF THE DAY

Wibutee

Sweet Mental
Sonne/Fusion 3

This Norweigian quartet wears their influences like band-buttons on a knapsack: chunky Zappa-esque structures, ethereal snatches à la Sigur Ros, the odd Ornette-like wail. Trouble is, their compatriots Jaja Jazzist do this stuff with more intensity and texture. On record, Wibutee can't get beyond the clichés of their songs' titles – Travel with You, Stereo Plains, It's All Here, Two with Nature. On stage there's a lot more salt and vinegar in their playing, as they demonstrated opening for Eivind Aarset two years back. **(Wibutee plays outdoors at the Bell stage tonight at 10.)**

JUAN RODRIGUEZ

Bridgewater seduces with a little help from friends

Deep French voice charms Place des Arts

PETER HADEKEL
SPECIAL TO THE GAZETTE

Dee Dee Bridgewater is a vocalist with a deep feeling for the jazz tradition. But within her beats the heart of a French romantic.

The U.S. singer made Paris her adopted home in the late 1980s and resurrected a career that had gone off the rails.

Friday night at Théâtre Maisonneuve of Place des Arts, she delivered a bow to thank a country that has spawned a great line of vocalists and songwriters.

Reprising her Grammy-nominated 2005 album J'ai deux amours, she met the tricky challenge of infusing French torch songs with a jazz sensibility.

For Bridgewater, it's always about her group's sound, and she surrounded herself with a fine supporting cast.

Marc Berthoumieux provided the essential ingredient on accordion, with lovely, wistful lines and rich, thumping chords.

Louis Winsberg was a revelation on guitar, mixing a gypsy sound with slashing jazz and blues chords, while Ira Coleman set the foundation on bass and Argentine percussionist Minino Garay added just a hint of tango.

Ever the entertainer, Bridgewater was equal parts blues mama, seductress and stand-up comic as she charmed a full house.

But in the end, it was that deep, Sarah Vaughan-inflected voice that made her interpretations of tunes like Ne me quitte pas, Avec le temps, La mer and Les feuilles mortes so convincing.

MONTREAL INTERNATIONAL JAZZ FESTIVAL

Buck 65, aka Richard Terfry, calls himself a "real purist," and says he can't get enough of real old-time jazz artists.

BUCK 65 on jazz, hip-hop, and his fascination with the new and old

Bucking the trend

JUAN RODRIGUEZ
SPECIAL TO THE GAZETTE

It's a long way from 50 Cent to Buck 65, in scratch and social currency. Last time I chatted with Buck 65 – né Richard Terfry, born in rural Mount Uniacke, N.S., turntablist and DJ auteur of such cross-genre classics as Talkin' Honky Blues and Secret House Against the World – he was still carrying around a bulky CD-wallet, flipping out the cover booklets of everything from Ellington to Gainsbourg. Back then he said he liked his jazz with a banjo and, over the phone recently from Calgary, he said that nothing had changed, save the acquisition of an iPod.

"Most of the jazz I have on my iPod is from the earliest era, old Ellington, King Oliver, early Louis Armstrong, a lot of Jelly Roll Morton. That real old-time stuff that I can't seem to get enough of. Although in the last few months I've been having a little personal bebop renaissance."

When asked how he first heard jazz, Terfry replies with an 'I-hate-to-admit-this' tone: "Admittedly when I started out as a jazz fan I had really bad taste. My introduction came largely through hip-hop music. In the early '90s hip-hop began using jazz as a source for sampling, and the era of choice was a dark period in jazz, the '70s, a lot of fusion stuff. When I speak to jazz purists, everyone seems to roll their eyes at that sound Miles Davis created."

As a proselytizer for old-school classics, Buck 65 says he's put himself in a strange place.

"That whole argument (between styles and eras) creates a really high fence that divides people, and I find myself straddling it. I guess you could say I'm a real purist – into the early days, roots and foundations of the music – and yet here I am getting it from hip-hop and creating hip-hop. For my own listening preferences, I like it pretty pure. Then when it comes time for me to write songs and go into the studio, I'm the kind of person who really enjoys diversity. Some people have an argument about the way jazz festivals have evolved, inviting people like me to play. But the diversity makes it a rich experience for the ticket-buyer."

The danger in diversity is dilettantism, he says.

"The key is to not go in there blind, walking through the whole music world, like, 'I'll take a little of this' and 'Oh, that has a nice bright colour.' It's important that you have the appreciation for the tradition. I don't look at (what I do) as bastardization, I'm approaching the music with complete respect, hopefully adding something to it. I like the idea of tilling new ground and trying new ideas out. But the purpose isn't to piss people off or upset them."

Listening to meandering jazz solos can seem an alien experience to people weaned on bits and bites and factoids: "There's been a severe shortening of the attention span. It's just a sign of the times – you look at the news on television, and they divide the screen with banners telling you the weather, the traffic, the sports scores, the stocks, because everyone is weaned in this culture for little sound bites. I think we're being conditioned to have shorter attention spans. In fact conditioning is the key to the whole thing, people want to hear a 3½-minute song.

"But if you've grown up with an appreciation for craft and musicianship and challenge, then you're likely the sort of person to sit back and enjoy an extended solo and appreciate its intricacies."

His penchant for scouring record shops has not abated: "If anything it's just gotten stronger. The only real change – and this is a recent development – is I really resisted the idea of getting music from the Internet. I always really believed in the idea of the physical object of the album or CD. But there's been the odd time I see something specific that I'll admit I've bought a few things from there.

"All in all my thirst gets deeper all the time. It seems the more I hear, the more excited I get, the more the hunger grows; I find it's almost like a crippling disease, an addiction. I made a new friend recently who's really into Bollywood films, Indian pop music, strange Japanese music, and new African music. Sometimes I wish people would stop showing me new stuff. There's not enough time in the day ..."

And yet he honours his role of making young audiences aware of the vast treasure trove of music out there – whether in shops or over the Net. "Being an archivist, that's really the way I think of what I do," he says.

"Guys like me are kind of musical archaeologists, with a spirit for exploration and that deep love for music and wanting to unearth forgotten sounds and try to find new ones. People collecting songs and wanting to show it off is an idea as old as music itself. It's a reflection of your personality. I look up to the guys who are out there working hard with that spirit, and maybe put a little money back in the pockets of some of these old musicians."

Buck 65 plays Club Soda, 1225 St. Laurent Blvd., tonight at midnight. Tickets are $21.50. Call 514-908-9090 or go to www.ticketpro.ca.

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Shorter didn't toot enough of his own sax

PETER HADEKEL
SPECIAL TO THE GAZETTE

Wayne Shorter would be the first to admit that when you throw out the rules, embrace freedom and live on the edge, your music can either soar or fall flat on its face.

The saxophonist's star-studded quartet did a little of both last night in a 75-minute set at Place des Arts' Théâtre Maisonneuve.

The presence of so much musical talent on a single stage was bound to set the bar high.

Shorter himself is arguably the most influential jazz composer of the last 45 years, a master of harmonic sophistication with a sound on the tenor and soprano sax that still makes the hair stand up on the back of your neck.

But even in the sterling company of pianist Danilo Perez, bassist John Patitucci and drummer Brian Blade, the whole was often less than the sum of the parts.

The band eschewed conventional rules – start with a theme, take some solos, return to the theme – in favour of a collective, open approach where ideas and phrases are exchanged and amplified.

When everything comes together, as it did in a brilliant encore, it was electric stuff.

But for much of the performance, the quartet seemed stuck in the same dynamic, harmonic and rhythmic gear.

And Shorter played far too little himself, content to let the others dictate direction.

Jazz fest facts

The Montreal International Jazz Festival runs through July 9. Tickets for indoor concerts are on sale at the Spectrum box office, Place des Arts box office or through the Ticketpro and Admission networks. Depending on the venue, tickets may also be available at individual box offices. Outdoor shows take place in the area bordered by Ste. Catherine St., President Kennedy Ave., Bleury St. and St. Laurent Blvd. For more information, call 514-871-1881 or go to www.montrealjazzfest.com.

REVIEW

Music needs no excuse

Baaba Maal gets the crowd hooked

BERNARD PERUSSE
THE GAZETTE

Baaba Maal is a man of few words. The Gazette tried, and failed, to get an interview with him in advance of his appearance last night at the Spectrum. He also said in a recent documentary that he did not like to speak about his work, preferring to let the music do the talking.

And that's precisely what it did in last night's show. As the Senegalese superstar sat down with an acoustic guitar to delicately fingerpick the ballad Bayo, supported by two vocalists, the packed room fell to a hush. At the song's conclusion, he spoke passionately about AIDS orphans before following up with another haunting slow song.

The audience would wait for the encore before another quiet moment came.

The crowd hooked, Maal quickly built up to an impossibly spirited celebration with 13 musicians on stage. Nervous people on the floor watched waiters carrying trays full of beers over their heads while shuffling as the taut polyrhythms from Maal's five percussionists, including an irresistible talking drum, rang out like firecrackers. The groove laid a perfect foundation for chiming guitar work and the wiry, intense Maal's chest-rattling vocals.

Two dancers upped the ante with humour, joy and more than a bit of playful sexuality. And it seemed as if everybody wanted in on the act: Maal didn't seem to mind the dancers who jumped up on stage from the audience. Security took a different view.

As the first encore faded, the performance blew wide open one last time with a sea of hands clapping to the rocking beat.

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Live show disappoints

CéU is great on CD, but has a lot to learn

T'CHA DUNLEVY
GAZETTE MUSIC CRITIC

A studio album and a live performance are two different things, as was evident in Brazilian songstress CéU's performance at Club Soda Friday evening.

The Sao Paulo resident's self-titled debut album has garnered hefty praise in Europe, and earned her a respectable following here in Quebec (where it has sold almost 10,000 copies).

Her smooth amalgamation of a variety of music styles – from samba to bossa nova, reggae, hip-hop, soul, electronica and pop – has been hailed as a beacon of the new school of Brazil. But judging from Friday's show, CéU still has a way to go.

Her performance was satisfactory, but nothing more. Yes, she has a pretty voice, and yes, she's easy on the eyes, but where was the compelling stage presence, the seductive aura to lead us through these sensuous sounds?

Accompanied by a five-piece band, including DJ, CéU seemed tentative in her movements and contrived in the presentation of her songs.

The band took a questionable 20-minute break after a quick 40-minute set, but did come back looser and somewhat more engaging, offering hope that, with more experience under her belt, CéU might catch up to her potential.

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